

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN JOSE 1245

DEPARTMENT FOR ARA AND D/HA ONLY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, CS, NU
SUBJECT: SOMOZA-FACIO DISCUSSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

REF: SAN JOSE 1178

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. FOREIGN MINISTER GONZALO FACIO HAS INFORMED CHARGE THAT HIS MARCH 23 DISCUSSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEMS WITH PRESIDENT SOMOZA WAS UNPRODUCTIVE BUT MAY HAVE CREATED BASIS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSIONS OF SAME SUBJECT. END SUMMARY

2. FACIO SAID THAT HE SUGGESTED THAT SOMOZA VIEW U.S. HUMAN RIGHTS EFFORTS AS PART OF AN IDEOLOGICAL INITIATIVE WORTHY OF SUPPORT OF ALL ANTI-COMMUNIST GOVERNMENTS. HE ARGUED THAT U.S. COULD MAINTAIN CREDIBILITY ONLY BY DENOUNCING HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS WHEREVER THEY OCCURRED, EVEN IN TRADITIONALLY-FRIENDLY COUNTRIES. HE SUGGESTED THAT ANTI-COMMUNIST GOVERNMENTS SUCH AS GON COULD RESPOND POSITIVELY TO SUCH CRITICISM WITHOUT WEAKENING THEMSELVES. IF THEY DID, THIS WOULD LEAVE MOSTLY COMMUNIST GOVERNMENTS EXPOSED AS BEING DEPENDENT FOR THEIR SURVIVAL ON VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS OF THEIR CITIZENS.

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3. ALTHOUGH FACIO CLEARLY HAD EXPECTED THIS LINE OF REASONING WOULD BE APPEALING IN NICARAGUA, SOMOZA WASN'T HAVING ANY. FACIO REPORTED THAT SOMOZA FLEW INTO A RAGE OVER WHICH SOMOZA CALLED HYPOCRISY AND SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS OF U.S. THOSE WHO ALLEGED HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN NICARAGUA WERE EITHER COMMUNISTS

OR WERE PLAYING THE GAME OF THE COMMUNISTS. WHILE HE WAS TRYING TO PROTECT NICARAGUA AGAINST CUBAN-ASSISTED GUERRILLA MOVEMENT, U.S. WAS GETTING READY TO MAKE AMENDS WITH CUBA. SOMOZA HAD TO FIGHT AGAINST SUBVERSIVES AND GUERRILLAS WHO WANTED TO TOPPLE HIS GOVERNMENT AND WAS BEING CRITICIZED IN U.S. FOR DOING SO, BUT KOREAN AND PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENTS WERE FREE TO ENGAGE IN WHOLESAL HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS. SOMOZA SAID HE HAD NOT YET DECIDED HOW BUT HE INTENDED TO SHOW U.S. THAT HE COULD NOT BE PUSHED AROUND. HE WAS CONTEMPLATING TV APPEARANCE IN WHICH HE WOULD DENOUNCE U.S.G. AND WAS ALSO CONTEMPLATING DIVERSION OF FUTURE NICARAGUAN IMPORTS TO NON-U.S. MANUFACTURERS AND SUPPLIERS. SOMOZA SAID HE HAD NOT DECIDED WHETHER TO REJECT U.S. SECURITY ASSISTANCE BUT IF HE DID HE WOULD HAVE NO DIFFICULTY IN FINDING ANOTHER SOURCE OF ARMS SUPPLY.

4. FACIO REPORTED THAT HE URGED SOMOZA TO SUPPORT CREATION OF POSITION OF UN HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN ORDER TO DEMONSTRATE THAT HE HAD NOTHING TO FEAR FROM OBJECTIVE, NON-POLITICAL EFFORTS TO INVESTIGATE AND STAMP OUT HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS. HE ARGUED THAT NICARAGUA'S SUPPORT OF CREATION OF THIS POSITION WOULD HELP GON TO DEFEND ITSELF AGAINST CRITICISM BY HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCATES; FAILURE TO SUPPORT WOULD BE INTERPRETED AS AN ADMISSION OF FEAR OF EXPOSURE OF VIOLATIONS IN NICARAGUA. SOMOZA APPARENTLY WAS NOT ATTRACTED BY THIS ARGUMENT.

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5. FACIO DID NOT OFFER SUGGESTION OF IMPARTIAL INVESTIGATION OF RESPONSIBLE ALLEGATIONS AND APPROPRIATE DISCIPLINARY ACTION BECAUSE HE JUDGED SOMOZA TO BE TOO EMOTIONAL TO BE ABLE TO CONSIDER IT SERIOUSLY. HE ALSO CONCLUDED THAT TO MAKE SAME SUGGESTION AS HAD BEEN OFFERED BY AMBASSADOR THEBERGE WOULD CAUSE SOMOZA TO THINK THAT HE, FACIO, WAS ACTING AT BEHEST OF U.S.G. ALTHOUGH THE DISCUSSION WITH SOMOZA WAS NOT VERY FRUITFUL, FACIO SAID, HE THOUGHT IT HAD CREATED BASIS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSIONS OF SAME SUBJECT WITH SOMOZA. FACIO SIAD IF EARLIER OPPORTUNITY DID NOT ARISE HE OR

PRESIDENT ODUBER WOULD SEEK TO HAVE ANOTHER PRIVATE DISCUSSION WITH SOMOZA DURING NEXT MEETING OF CENTRAL AMERICAN CHIEFS OF STATE.

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